Two Ghosts by buttercreambeans

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Summary:

Being Billy Hargrove’s girlfriend had its pros, but surely enough, there were more cons. When Steve Harrington walks into a violent moment between the two of you, you can’t help but think that maybe there’s something better than this.

(Previously titled Underneath It All)

THIS WORK IS FINISHED.

1. I.

Author's Note:

> I don't know if i'd like to make this a series, pretty sure no one is going to read this, but it's a start.
> Enjoy :)
> Leave kudos and comments or any constructive criticism!

You shoved last period's books into your locker, stuffing your bag with 6th period's. You sighed, looking at yourself in the small mirror you placed inside the locker. Your eyes were puffy and red - from last night's fight with Billy. The bags underneath your eyes were still prominent, no matter how much makeup you used to disguise them. You shook your head and closed your locker louder than you wanted.

And to your luck, Billy was leaning against the locker next to yours. "Hey, princess."

You ignored him completely and successfully brushed past him until he grabbed your wrist.

"Still mad?" He lowered his voice, but his cocky smile still lingered on his smug face - the face you wanted to slap badly.

"Yes, in fact, I'm still mad. Now, will you move out of my fucking way? I need to get to 6th." You spat as you tried to leave, but he simply blocked your way.

He sighed, "Look, Y/N…" He chewed his lip. "Can I just - just make it up to you?"

"No, you can't. I know what your little plan is, Hargrove. Your cologne is stronger than usual, I can smell your hairspray from a mile away, and you're wearing those denim jeans that - apparently - woos all the girls. You left me hanging, Billy! In front of my friends, my family! Do you know how embarrassing that is?" You raised your voice, causing students in the hallway to stare at the commotion between the two of you.

“Exactly why I want to make it up to you. Come over to my place tonight,” His hand caressed your cheek. You fought the urge to lean into his touch.

“I have to study, and-”

“Then you can study.” He chuckled, “And I’ll - I’ll just, I don’t know, be there.”

You inhaled sharply, “I’ll think about it.”

“See you later, baby.” He kissed the top of your head, before he strode over to his next class. Fortunately, your classroom was near your locker, so you didn’t need much time to get there.

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The bell rang and you jolted upright in your seat. You looked down at your empty notebook, which was supposed to be filled with notes. Shit, you thought. You were so occupied thinking about Billy that you couldn’t focus on schoolwork.

You gathered all your belongings and placed them in your bag before you left the classroom. You felt a tap on your shoulder and you looked to see your friend, Luke.

“Hey, Luke,” You greeted him.

“Hey, um, I was wondering if you had last week’s notes from Ms. Peterson. I missed school that day and I heard it was a pretty important lesson.”

“Oh, right! I didn’t see you that day. Gimme a sec,” You grabbed your binder and pulled out the notes from that class. “Here you go. Just give it back to me next week.”

He nodded, “Thanks, Y/N. You’re a lifesaver.” He reached around to hug you from the side and you watched as he ran off to his locker.

But when you looked back in front of you, Billy was making his way over. A look of jealousy and anger was plastered on his face. You mentally and physically prepared yourself for what was going to

happen. Billy was, needless to say, the most jealous boy you've ever dated. It was scary, but you learned to deal with it.

"Y/N!" He exclaimed. You flinched at the sound of his booming voice. You made a beeline for the girls' bathroom and pretended not to see him. However, that did not work. Billy opened the door and shut it behind him. "What the fuck do you think you were doing?" He backed you up against the nearest wall.

His intimidating frame devoured yours. "What do you mean?" You learned to have a backbone when you talked to an angry Billy.

"You know exactly what I mean!" He shouted. You stifled a whimper. It was times like these when you had to remember that Billy was going through something too, and the only way for him to cope was to make others feel vulnerable around him. "Why the hell was that little bitch, Luke, all over you, huh?!"

"I just g-gave him my notes and he t-thanked me." You explained with a shaky voice.

"Yeah? You cheatin' on me, Y/N?" He craned his neck to look at you from a better angle.

"No! No, I-I would never!" You gasped. You knew where this was headed.

"What. Did. I. Say. About lying?" He inhaled through his nostrils. He was trying to keep his composure.

"Billy, I'm not - I'm not lyin-"

You let out a scream as he grunted loudly and punched the wall beside your head. You quivered in horror.

"Listen here, you - you bitch," He grabbed a fistful of your hair as you tried to get away. "I don't tolerate lying or cheating, so unless you tell me the truth…"

"It is the fucking truth!" You cried out. "Let me go, Billy, you're hurting me!"

He looked down at you with a predatory gaze before he swiftly let go of your hair, causing you to fall forward. You were a crying, bawling mess by now. You heard the door click and looked up with wide eyes as it opened.

“What the hell is-” Steve Harrington stood in the doorframe. His eyes widened as well as he studied the scene in front of him. “Billy? Y/N? What’s going on?” His voice held a suspicious and cautious tone.

“None of your business, Harrington. Get the hell out of here unless you want your ass kicked.” Billy replied harshly.

Steve gulped before he glanced at you. Your face was full of pain and discomfort, pleading silently for him to help. “Y/N? Everything alright?” He stepped inside the bathroom now.

“Steve, I-”

“Everything’s fine. We’re just havin’ a lil fun here, aren’t we, Y/N?”

“You’re crying, what’s wrong?” Steve whispered for you to hear. Your throat was hoarse as you tried to speak. Automatically, Steve’s instict was to help you up, and Billy picked up on that.

“You touch her and you’re dead, Harrington.”

“Oh, yeah?” Steve rose to his feet. His jaw clenched like his fists. “You think I’m stupid? You’re hurting her. Not cool, man. You don’t - you don’t hurt girls. You don’t hurt anyone.” He took a small step with each word, until he was face to face with Billy, who punched him instantly. Steve ducked right on time and was able to land a punch instead.

You cried for help as you watched the scene unfold and in a matter of minutes, Billy was on the floor. Steve was straddling him, landing multiple blows to his discolored face. When Billy was completely immobile, Steve rushed to help you up. He pulled you into his chest as you both left the bathroom in pain.

“C'mon, let me take you to the station.” He said softly.

“No, please don’t, I-I can’t let anyone know that he was-”

“Hurting you? Y/N, it’s pretty obvious by now. We could tell Hopper, he’d definitely do something.”

“No, no-not right now.” You shook your head, shoulders slumped. Steve opened the exit door and helped you to his car. You flopped down onto the passenger seat and stared at nothing.

Steve slid into the driver’s seat. You looked over at him and was now able to get a good look at his wounds. Blues, yellows, and purples started to form on his cheek. His lip was split and bleeding.

“Holy shit, Steve.”

“Do I still look as pretty?” He joked, wincing as you turned his head to look at you.

“You need to get patched up.”

“I got it.”

“You helped me. I get to help you now.” You murmured.

“Okay,” He succumbed after a long sigh. “Where to?”

“Still remember where I live?” You chuckled as he backed out of the parking lot.

“Jesus, I haven’t been to your house since what, the first grade?”

“It’s been a long time, Steve Harrington.” You shrugged. He smiled at you.

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“Parents aren’t home, so I have all the freedom.” You shut your house’s front door. Steve hung his jacket on the coat rack near the stairs. “You should sit down on the sofa. I’ll go get some first aid.”

Steve nodded and did so. He looked around, studying the pictures hung on the walls. “Found it,” You strode back into the living room with a first aid kit and a bottle of beer. You handed the cold beer to Steve and sat down next to him with your legs crossed.

You opened the first aid kit and searched around for the right things. You rubbed some alcohol wipes on his face and winced as he hissed in pain. “Sorry, it’s gonna hurt like hell.”

“Thanks for the assurance,” He scoffed. An awkward silence washed over the two of you. Everytime you locked eyes, Steve would look away, as if he was pretending that he wasn’t gazing.

“Shouldn’t you be with, like, Nancy or something?” You questioned, pressing an ice pack to his cheek.

“Uh, she - we broke up.”

“You did? Woah, I’m really sorry.”

“No, no, it was my fault. I don’t think I was treating her right.”

You huffed, “Tell me about it.”

“Oh, I-I didn’t mean it l-like that, Y/N-”

“I’m joking, Steve.” You put some ointment on Steve’s lips. “You and Nancy were good together.”

“She’s better off with Jonathan.” He grunted when you roughly placed a bandage on a small cut on his cheek. “Ow, what was that for?”

“You’re so stupid.” You giggled shyly. Steve’s cheeks turned a bright rose when your eyes landed on his face. “Any girl who ends up with Steve Harrington is lucky.”

His eyebrows shot up and his gentle smile shifted into a confident one, reminding you of Billy’s. “You think so?”

“I know so.” You whispered. What were you doing? Realization and embarrassment washed over you. “I’m sorry. God, what am I saying…”

Steve shook his head. “I’m flattered…” He paused. He spoke nostalgically, “Remember, uh, freshman year? Everyone thought we were dating?”

You nodded, moving to lay down on the sofa. You rested your head against the armrest, watching Steve talk.

“I can’t say that I didn’t enjoy it,” He shrugged nonchalantly.

“Me neither.”

You had to admit, Steve Harrington was pretty cool. Underneath all that hair and masculinity, he was a sweetheart.

2. II.

Summary for the Chapter:

> You and Steve get a little closer than expected, leading to a new turn of events.

Notes for the Chapter:

> Enjoy Chapter 2! 3 will be on its way! :)

Steve was out by your pool, sitting in one of your old deck chairs. He was smoking a cigarette, which you found incredibly gross yet attractive at the same time. You closed the sliding door that led to the pool, joining Steve.

“Oh, hey.” He greeted you, noticing your presence. He couldn’t tear his eyes away as you pulled a deck chair and sat down beside him. He threw his cigarette away, crushing it with his shoe. “I was just planning on leavin’…”

“It’s really late.” You started, “I don’t think it’s safe to drive out there.”

“Worried about me already, Y/L/N?”

“Oh, can it. I’m doing you a favor. You can take the couch.” You scoffed, smirking at him. He stared into your eyes and you swore you were breathless for a solid 5 seconds.

"Glad I heard you and Billy in the bathroom. God knows what would've happened. He shouldn't be treating you this way."

"Steve...it's - it's not like that. It happens. Couples argue, I'm sure you know that."

"Listen, that was not some dumb argument." He bit the inside of his mouth and hung his head low. "Are - are you happy with Billy? Honestly, does he make you happy?"

"Of course. I wouldn't be with him if I wasn't happy. I love him a l-

lot. I do."

Steve studied you, uncertain whether you were truly sincere or if this was another lie. "Just let me know the next time he hurts you, I'll beat the shit out of him."

"You'll just end up bloody and beaten like today." You breathed out.

"Just as long as you're safe." I don't understand why she's still with that asshole, Steve thought to himself.

You cleared your throat and turned your attention to the water, an idea popped into your head. “We should have some fun."

"Hm?"

"What do you say about taking a dip?"

“Swimming? This late?” He asked as you took off your shirt.

“Why? You chicken, Harrington?” You challenged him, shimmying out of your skirt.

“Me? Hell no,” His tone of voice matched yours as he arched an eyebrow. "Are you challenging me?”

You grinned victoriously as Steve pulled his sweatshirt off. He unbuttoned his jeans and was left wearing nothing but boxers. Just like his did, your eyes travelled all over his body.

“See something you like?” He smirked at you. You shook your head with a scoff before diving into the pool. Once you returned to the surface, Steve cannonballed in, making a huge splash that made you yelp. He bobbed to the surface and instantly, the both of you began splashing water on each other.

“Steve!” You whined as you tried to swim away from him, only for him to chase you.

“I’m gonna get ya, Y/N!” He laughed as he caught up to you. You felt his bare arms wrap around your chest, usually your instinct would be to break away, but you stilled in his arms. Something about this - him

holding you - felt so...in place.

Steve turned you in his arms. Your faces just inches apart. The smiles on your faces disappeared into a thin line of realization. The water sloshed around you as you placed your hands on his broad shoulders. Your eyes followed a droplet of water that slid from his eyebrow to his plump lips. Your hand reached to trace his lips, but Steve gently caught your wrist, and you feared his reaction. You glanced at his hand that was wrapped around your wrist and then glanced back at him. He was leaning in, and every nerve, fiber, and muscle in your body told you to lean in as well. He was going to kiss you.

Then you remembered. Billy. It would be considered cheating if you kissed another boy behind his back. You loved Billy. You certainly couldn't do this to him.

You splashed water all over Steve, causing him to jolt back in surprise. You laughed it off.

"Agh, screw you," He huffed, running his hands through his damp hair. He obviously looked disappointed, but he tried to cover it up with a cheeky grin.

"We should head back inside," You motioned for the door. "We're gonna freeze if we're out here any longer."

The both of you got out of the pool and retreated back into the house. A tension lingered between the two of you.

However, you never noticed Billy's parked car, and him watching the two of you.

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You locked yourself in your room once Steve was settled in on the couch. You sat cross-legged on your unmade bed, biting the nail of your thumb. Steve was going to kiss you. There was no denying that. What would've happened if you kissed him back? You couldn't help but conjure up different outcomes. A part of you felt unsatisfied, but the other felt pathetic and stupid. Maybe there was something more than Billy.

No, you thought. You were being completely and utterly naive.

Steve, however, was drowning in his own thoughts. He paced around your living room. His heart rate was trying to keep up with his own thoughts that were endlessly racing through his mind. He tugged at his damp brown locks.

"What the hell were you thinking, Steve?" He spoke to himself, sitting on the last step of your staircase. He pinched the bridge of his nose and shut his eyes. "Of course she wouldn't kiss me, she's still with Billy!" He thought out loud with a hushed voice. You could hear Steve's voice from your room, but the words he were saying were simply a blur.

"He's probably still hung up on Nancy," You mumbled, moving to turn off your lamp that sat on your nightstand.

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You woke up with a jump. Your alarm clock was blaring loudly and you quickly scrambled out of bed.

"Shit. Shit. Shit!" You wasted no time and dressed out of your pajamas. As you were putting on a shoe, you hopped one-legged out of your room. You nearly tumbled as you made your way down the stairs.

Steve was sound asleep on the sofa. You threw his shoes at him, causing him to immediately wake up. ""Ouch! What the hell are-"

"Get up! We're gonna be late for school if we're movin' at this pace!" You scolded him, grabbing your jacket and Steve's car keys.

"Jesus, you sound like my coach. Calm down, will you, Y/N?" He huffed, chuckling. You pushed him out of the house and followed after you locked the front door. You both hopped into his car and pulled out of the driveway after he turned the engine on.

You were cruising down the road while music played through the radio.

"How'd you sleep?" You asked, staring out your window.

"A bed would've been nice. But the couch was pretty comfy." You rolled your eyes before Steve turned serious. One of his hands steered the wheel and his arm rested against the car window. "About last night, you know, I just...I didn't mean to - to make you feel uncomfortable or anything like that. I was just so caught in the moment and - and you looked - but my intentions were completely different, trust me, but either ways, it was rude of me to...to..." Steve trailed off once he saw your stare. "I...I should shut up now." He blushed.

"We could forget about it. Pretend it never happened and have a clean slate if that's what you want." You replied, fiddling with your thumbs.

"Yeah, t-that would be...great." He answered unconvincingly.

You crossed your arms over your chest. "Is there a problem with that?"

"What do you mean?" Steve looked back at you.

"I'm asking if there's a prob-"

"I know you're asking there's a problem. What makes you think there's one?"

"I didn't say there was a problem-"

"Then why ask-"

"I'm just confirming if there's a problem, you just seem really affected about-"

You and Steve argued back and forth with loud, angry voices until Steve angrily bursted out, "There isn't a problem!"

He stepped on the brake, causing the car to arrive at a sudden stop. There was a thick silence except for your breaths as you two stared each other down. Without a word, you unbuckled your seatbelt, and it collided loudly with the window frame.

"What are you doing? Y/N?" Steve yelled out as you left the car,

slamming the door behind you.

"I'm walking!" You snapped at him.

"Y/N!" He started his car, following you slowly. "C'mon, you're gonna be late to school. This - this is stupid!"

You glared at him and flipped him off. You kept walking, ignoring Steve's voice and the honking of his car. It was not until after a couple minutes that Steve drove off. Maybe walking wasn't the best idea, but as long as you weren't in his car arguing about something that would get you nowhere.

After at least ten minutes, suddenly, you heard the familiar roar of a car. You looked behind you and saw a '79 Camaro approach. Billy.

The car halted beside you and you stopped walking. Shit, was he still mad? Was he going to hurt you again?You straightened your back and clenched your hands into fists. Billy stepped out of the car. He was wearing a red button-button-down with a low neckline and some jeans with a cigarette between his lips.

He looked you up and down, his predatory and wolfish gaze nowhere to be seen.

"Good morning, doll," He broke out into a grin upon seeing you again.

"Billy." You answered, staring at a puddle of mud on the road. He dropped his cigarette and kicked it with his shoe.

"Walking out here all by yourself? My, my, my, doesn't seem safe for a beautiful girl like you." His eyes were soft and his voice, sweet. Billy usually acted this way after the hellish fights or arguments you'd have.

"Something new for a change, I suppose." You shrugged, crossing your arms against your chest. You shivered slightly.

"Cold, huh? Get in the car, I'll take you to school." He opened the passenger door for you, waiting till you were inside to close it. You leaned against the window as he got in the driver's seat. "You look

like you didn't get any sleep." He scoffed as he began to drive.

"I didn't get much actually."

"Why? Were you up all night kissin' up to Harrington's ass?" Billy said casually, glancing over at you. Your cheeks went hot and you froze.

"No, I - Billy - he was -"

"No, no, no, I get it. I get it. Just as long as he knows what's mine and what isn't his." He emphasized.

You stumbled over your words, until you were finally able to get something out. "You're not mad?"

"Hell, why would I be? Pretty boy..." He chuckled darkly. "...he's got nothing on me." You felt chills run down your spine. This was not Billy. He seemed too...too calm. He was up to something, surely.

You nodded. Billy reached over and turned the music up. Classic rock blared throughout the interior of the car and you couldn't help but smile lightly as Billy sung along.

His hand rested on the top of your knee, occasionally travelling upward to your inner thigh. You wanted to brush him off, but you knew that would only aggravate him. But Billy stepped over a boundary when his hand brushed over your crotch.

"Billy..." You groaned, tired of what he was trying to accomplish.

"Y/N, c'mon-"

"I'm just not...feeling it today, you get me?" You briefly saw a flash of anger in his eyes. "But maybe next time, okay, babe?"

He sighed loudly and ran a hand through his hair. "M'kay, princess."

-

You arrived at school just as the bell rang. You bolted out of Billy's car after giving him a kiss and headed inside the building.

You were late by a few minutes when you walked into 1st period. The teacher didn't mind anyways. However, Steve was in this class too. You avoided his eyes as they followed you until you sat down a couple seats across from him. His bandaged cheek and healing lip were still there.

Your teacher continued with his lecture until the bell rang and instantly, students fleed the room. Steve darted straight for the door, completely ignoring you. You huffed and chased after him, walking closely behind him.

"Steve!" You grabbed his shoulder. He roughly brushed your hand off and didn't bother to look at you. "Listen, I'm sorry for what happened in the car. Can you just - holy crap, slow the fuck down!" You grabbed onto his backpack strap and tugged on it, but Steve simply shook you off and you fell on your behind. You landed with a thump on the floor and your books slid in all directions, yet you watched, hurt and shocked, as Steve continued to walk away.

3. III.

Summary for the Chapter:

> You're completely confused as to why Steve is mad at you. So you confide in someone who you least expected, causing you to find out more about Steve and this dilemma.

You ended school sad and upset. You were left wondering why the hell Steve was mad at you for what seemed like no reason. You rode with Billy to his house, awfully quiet.

"Bad day at school?" He inquired.

"No, just tired..." You trailed off, waving a hand. He glanced at you.

"What's been up with you lately, baby? Ever since you hung out with that fucker Steve you've-"

"It has nothing to do with him, Billy." You locked eyes with him sincerely, placing your hand on his thigh. He bit his lip as he looked down at the motion. He groaned.

"God, did I tell you how good you look today?"

You bursted out into a laughing fit, "Oh, shut up! I-I do not look good today at all - never."

Billy's tongue peeked out of his mouth as he eyed you. "I should show you, huh. How good you look..."

Billy leaned over and you giggled, pressing further into the passenger door. "Show me when you get home, I don't wanna get into a car accident." You caressed his cheek then kissed it. As soon as you pulled away, Billy pushed the back of your head so that you met his lips with a heated kiss. From there on, Billy drove much more faster to get to his house.

You dropped all your things in his bedroom, flopping down onto his bed with a sigh. He did the same after discarding his shirt, throwing it somewhere across the room. He rolled onto his side and used his elbow as support as he stared at you dreamily.

"I fucking love you, you know that?" You whispered, looking up at the ceiling.

"Yeah, babe, I know." He chuckled, before leaning over to kiss your lips. His hands carded through your hair as the kiss deepened. You both sat up, causing Billy to press you closer to his bare and toned chest. You pulled away and gasped for air, resting your forehead against Billy's.

His eyes were clouded with lust before he attacked your lips once more and you began tugging at his long hair. He moaned as your nails scratched his back. You took off your top and tossed it off the bed. Billy nipped at your neck until he found the spot that made you writhe in pleasure.

"Billy..." You moaned as he lowered you down onto the bed.

He left a trail of wet kisses from the valley of your breasts to your navel. He pulled down your jeans without hesitation, and you lifted your hips off the bed to help out. You did the same with his so that your jeans joined the rising pile of clothes. You laid Billy on his back, straddling his hips. You leaned down to kiss him, causing your hair to fall into a veil that covered your faces.

You could feel Billy's smirk against your lips as you began to circle your hips around his obvious arousal. "Fuck, Y/N..." He moaned, biting his lip roughly.

You threw your head back in pleasure. The friction felt so good and you were nearing your edge. That was until Billy flipped you over once more so that you were underneath him.

"Billy!"

"I'm not blowing my load that way." He mumbled before he suddenly

pulled your panties off. He tugged his boxers down and rolled a condom onto his length.

You moaned his name as he pushed himself into you and arched your back against the sheets. Billy held your legs up, pounding into you without giving you time to adjust. He was rougher than usual, but then again, Billy was always rough. The sex went on for a couple more minutes - you came first and Billy kept going until he reached his orgasm.

Billy tied and threw the condom into the trash. The two of you cleaned up before you relaxed on the bed. It was quiet as you rested your head on Billy's chest. The only thing you could hear was his heartbeat and the puffs of smoke he breathed out from the cigarette he just lit.

"You're gonna die from smoking those one day." You scoffed. Billy looked at you unamused. "I'm serious. It's dumb and dangerous."

He shook his head, tapping the top of his cigarette. "You sound like Max."

"Do I?"

"Speaking of which, where is that brat?" He sat up, causing you to move away. "Shit, Y/N." He left the room and peered into Max's. The window was open. "Shit!"

"Billy, I'm sure she's fine. She probably *heard* us and decided to leave. Maybe she's with her friends." You explained. You always had a soft spot for Max. You hated when he would argue with her. However, Max did like you a lot more than her step-brother. "I'll go find her."

"The fuck? No, that brat can find her own way home. She's done it before. She doesn't deserve your help, Y/N."

You sighed. "Babe, your dad will most likely be angry if he finds out you lost Max on your watch." He flinched when you mentioned his dad. "You can stay here and - and workout or what while I go get your sister back."

He rolled his eyes and pressed his cigarette into his ashtray. He stood up from the bed and strode out the room without a word. You huffed and left his room too after dressing up.

You snatched Billy's car keys off the kitchen counter when he wasn't paying attention and walked out the front door.

You started his car and pulled out of the driveway. You had a couple theories as to where Max would be. Either with the Byer's, the Wheeler's, or the Henderson's.

You decided to drive over to Dustin's house, since it was a closer walk for the kids from the school. You arrived at Dustin's shortly and knocked twice on the door. No one answered. You knocked again, this time more patiently.

You heard commotion inside, hearing something along the lines of 'Shit, shit, shit!' and 'Could that be the pizza?'

The door swung open and you crossed your arms over your chest as you stared down Dustin.

"Oh, h-hey, Y/N!" He exclaimed too enthusiastically. He shut the door so that his head was only to be seen, as if he was hiding something. You raised a brow and smirked. "What, uh, what brings you here?" His voice cracked at the end, and you almost cackled out loud.

"I was hoping to find Max."

"Max?!" He replied loudly. "Max...no, she's not here - why would she be here exactly?"

"Dustin, cut the bullshit. I'm not Billy. I don't really care that she's with you guys."

Dustin sighed in relief. "Thank god. I thought that hound was starting to control you." He opened the door and let you in, closing it behind you.

"Hound? Are you talking about Billy?" You chuckled.

"Who else?"

Your face softened when you saw all the kids on the sofa - Mike, Will, Lucas, and Max. "Hey, guys." You nodded at them.

"Y/N?" Max smiled and ran over to hug you. She looked up at you with joy before she began to frown. "Did my brother send you here?"

"Nope, just checking whether or not you got kidnapped by a bunch of boys." You winked. "You mind if I hang out here for a while, boys?"

None of them made a single complaint, ushering you to sit down next to them. You were like a big sister to them after all. They played a round of Dungeons and Dragons until Dustin lost. Out of irritation, he plopped himself down next to you on the couch, watching as his friends yelled at each other.

"So..." You began. "How's school?"

"I'm fine not answering that question," He grinned.

"Of course, my bad."

"You wanna say something?"

You rubbed the back of your neck nervously. "Well, um, you're pretty close to Steve, right?"

"Hell yeah, why?"

"We kinda - we're not in a good place right now as - as friends and I think he's pissed at me. I don't know what I did, D." You shrugged, resting your chin on the palm of your hand.

"For starters, why aren't you in a good place?"

"I - I really can't say."

"Uhuh..." Dustin pursed his lips into a thin line as he stood up and began to walk away. "Then I really can't help you."

"Okay, fine. C'mere." You waved him over. He slid back onto the couch, obviously interested. "Well, Steve walked into an argument between me and Billy, he stopped it, but the boys threw a couple

punches at each other. I took him home to patch him up and he ended up staying longer than expected. We talked and messed around, then - then he tried to kiss me."

"Kiss you?!" He shouted, alerting everyone in the room. "That's my boy!"

"What are you talking about?"

"Don't you get it?" Dustin cradled his head in his hands, before he shot up from the couch. "He likes you!"

"But he and Nancy just broke up. He obviously is still in love with her. Plus, I'm dating Billy."

"Right. Wrong. And why is that even a thing?" He scrunched up his face. "He tried to kiss you 'cause he likes you - a lot probably - and of course he's gonna be a big baby about it, you rejected him! Plus, you're dating an asshole." He pointed out casually.

You groaned. "He's really not an-"

Max snapped her head around to glare at you with a pointed look. "Yeah, he is an asshole, Y/N. You two are pretty loud when you fight."

"That doesn't mean I should be with Steve then." You fired back.

"No one's saying you should be with him," Lucas spoke up. "Just give Steve a chance." He glanced at Max with a small smile.

"Honestly, Y/N, when you were Steve did you ever think about Billy?" Dustin questioned.

"Only like twice, but because I was occupied hanging out with...with Steve." You began slowly while your eyebrows furrowed."And I was happy. I guess. I didn't have any fears of Billy until he tried to kiss me, but all in all, Steve made me happy."

"There you have it." Max said.

"But just because Steve's a great guy, doesn't mean I'm ditching Billy."

All the kids groaned in sync. "Don't you guys understand how cruel that would be?"

"It wouldn't be cruel 'cause Billy's an ass," Mike rolled his eyes. Will nodded along.

"Whatever." You tousled your hair before getting up from the couch. "I shouldn't be asking you all in the first place. This is a bunch of grown up stuff. C'mon Max, we gotta go."

Max sighed and followed you out the door with slumped shoulders. She grabbed her skateboard and then joined you in Billy's Camaro.

"You just can't keep leaving the house without letting your brother know." You frowned at Max as you drove.

"You guys are disgusting." She mumbled. "Is dating him even worth it?"

"Listen, I love Billy, okay? I don't know why everyone keeps questioning that..." You said exasperated.

"Sure, Y/N." Max chuckled.

-

You parked in Billy's driveway, following Max into the house. The front door swung open before Max could even knock. Billy looked angry as hell.

He grabbed Max by a handful of her hair and pushed her into the house.

"What the fuck, Billy?! Get off her!" You shouted, smacking his shoulder.

"Stay out of this, Y/N!" He growled at you. "You little bitch, sneaking out of the house again? For what?! For those shitholes you call your friends?!" He backed her up against the wall, causing you to intervene.

"What the fuck is wrong with you?!" You yelled at him, slapping his

face. "Is this your way of coping?! Hurting little girls?! You're sick, you know that?

"I don't give a single shit, Y/N. Fuck. Off."

"You're a loser, okay? You're lonely and weak and you think you're greater than everyone, only to come home cowering away from your daddy 'cause he hates your guts!" She spat. Angry tears formed at your eyes as you watched the scene unfold. Max grabbed her skateboard and ran out of the house without hesitation.

"Max!" You called after her. You spun on your heels to face Billy who grabbed your arm and pulled you back. "You're an asshole!"

"And you know what?" He started, stepping closer to you. "You're a slut. You don't think I see you sleeping around with Steve Harrington? You're just a girl I can come home to and fuck. That's it. You're worthless." He said in a quiet voice.

"You angrily wiped at your tears, grabbing your things. "I should've left you the first time you hurt me. Everyone was right. Steve was right."

You turned your back on him and strode out the door, empty and emotionless. You walked home with slumped shoulders and a broken heart, using your sleeves to wipe your tears.

-

You waited outside the house. Unsure if you should knock at this time of night. You did it anyways.

The porch light came on and the door opened, revealing a sleepy Mrs. Henderson.

"Hello, Mrs. Henderson. I'm so sorry to bother you this time of night."

"Oh, it's fine, dear. What's the issue?"

"Well, I promised Dustin that one of these days I would come over and stay the night. You know, he's a persuasive little guy. And also, my parents are away on a trip, so it's really lonely back at home." You

lied.

Mrs. Henderson nodded. "That's a great idea, good thing you came here. Dustin should be in his room." She let you in, and you instantly made a beeline for your friend's room.

You heard him talking to someone on his walkie talkie, but barged into his personal space anyways. His head snapped at the door and his jaw hung open as he spoke into the walkie, "I'll talk to you later, Mike. Over and out."

"Mind if I crash?" You smiled sadly.

"You know I love it when you come over." He returned the smile, but it fades quickly. "What's wrong?"

You sat next to him on his bed and sucked on your bottom lip to stop the waterworks from happening. But it didn't work. You broke out into tears and cried into Dustin's shoulder. He held you, rubbing your back and reassuring you like a good friend would.

"Shhh, it's alright, Y/N." Dustin cooed. You pulled away from him, apologizing for the tear stains you left on his shirt. You sniffled and wiped at your tears. "What happened? If you want to tell me."

"I-I think Billy and I are done." You answered softly. "We got into an argument since he was mad that Max snuck out and he - he some messed up shit and well, I left."

Dustin shook his head. "What a dick."

"I'm sorry, D." A tear rolled down your cheek. "I should've listened to all of you. Especially Steve. He was right."

"It's alright, dude. You liked Billy and we weren't in the place to change your mind."

You agreed and yawned. "I can sleep on the floor."

"No, you sleep on my bed." Dustin insisted. "I'll be fine down here, besides, this floor is a lot more comfier."

You chuckled and went under the sheets, shutting your eyes as Dustin turned the lights off.

"Night, Dustin."

"You too, Y/N."

-

Once everything was quiet, you let all your tears out, sobbing silently into a pillow. You couldn't breathe, think, or speak, for that matter. It's as if everything inside you just snapped like a frail rope.

But Dustin wasn't asleep, really. He listened to your ragged breaths and could tell you were crying. After a while, you fell into sleep's arms, and Dustin got up from the makeshift floor bed he had. He catiously padded to the living room and went for the telephone. He held it up to his ear as he dialed a set of numbers. It took a few rings before someone on the other line picked up.

"H-hello?" Dustin sighed in relief at hearing the voice.

"Steve? Hey, dude, we got a problem."

"This late? What, is it a monster under your bed or some shit? Dus-"

"Steve!" He exclaimed in a hushed voice. "It's Y/N."

"What happened?" Steve instantly asked.

"She's asleep in my room. Apparently her and Billy are kinda over. But she seems really heartbroken and I don't know what I can do to help."

"Well, I'll come over in the morning before she wakes up hopefully. Just make sure she's alright for me, will you, buddy?"

"Sure do."

"Thanks. And get some sleep. It's not good for you to stay up this late."

Dustin walked back to bed after he hung up with Steve, knowing that you would be okay in the morning.

-

You woke up to the sound of a door slamming shut. You could make out two voices by the front door of the house. You stayed in bed for a few minutes until you heard the heard the sound of silverware clattering and the sizzling of a pan.You grumbled as you got out of bed, uncomfortable wearing last night's clothes that smelled of cigarettes and *Billy*. You weaved your way to the aroma of food, but stopped in your tracks as you studied the scene ahead of you.

You held onto the back of one of the chairs by the dining table, jaw ajar. Steve was cooking...breakfast? He hummed to himself, swaying his body lightly as he followed his tune. Your heart felt like it was being pinched due to the sight.

Steve turned, emptying the contents of the pan onto three plates. He glanced at you and his eyes widened as he gave you another glance. "Y/N..."

"Mornin'." You said, taking a seat at the table.

"You saw all of that? Like the humming and - and the-"

"Mhm..."

"Well, um -" Steve grabbed the two plates and set them down on the table before he reached for the third one, doing the same. "I decided to cook some eggs. Nothing special. I could've totally bought breakfast down the block but I just...*nevermind*, here, dig in."

Steve seemed different. No, it was as if Steve wasn't Steve.

Dustin came out of the bathroom, shutting the door behind him. "Oh, you're awake."

"Yeah, didn't wanna miss out on good food." You shrugged.

"Good food? More like great food." Dustin grinned, plopping down at the seat for the head of the table.

"Where's your mother?" You asked the kid.

"Left. She's doing some parent shit for the school. It's dumb."

You nodded, stabbing your eggs absent-mindedly.

"You gonna eat? Or what?" Steve asked without looking at you.

You narrowed your eyes at him, before you popped some food into your mouth. Dustin awkwardly cleared his throat, looking back and forth between you two. Breakfast was silent except for the sound of kitchen utensils scraping against plates and Dustin's obnoxiously loud chewing.

You could feel eyes on you and from the corner of your eye, you saw Steve and Dustin mouthing words at each other. You abruptly let go of your spoon and fork, letting it clatter against your plate. It caught the attention of both boys, who looked up fearfully.

"Dustin, can I talk to Steve alone?" You questioned, staring at your sweating glass of cold water. Dustin got up and hurriedly left the table, muttering something as he hid in his room. "Steve, why are *you* here?"

"What are you talking about? I'm here because I heard what happened. Dustin told me." He explained, holding his gaze.

"Oh, did you now? Because the last time I saw you, you completely shut me down. *Ignored* me." You chuckled bitterly.

"It wasn't like that." He shook his head, a hint of desperation laced in his voice.

"Then what was it?" Steve dropped his gaze.

"I-I don't know, but I didn't mean to ignore you."

"Is it because I didn't kiss you back?" You replied quietly. Steve stayed silent. "Steve, answer me-"

"I don't know!" He exclaimed. You jumped at his sudden loud voice. He apologized after realizing his behavior. "I just - I guess the kiss

was heat of the moment. Maybe it was because I missed Nancy, okay? Maybe I missed having someone to mess around with."

Your eyes widened and you felt a pang in your heart. "So, that's what I am. Glue."

"Glue? What does that mean?" He asked breathlessly.

"I'm some girl who can glue you back together again after you fall apart. I'm Nancy's substitute until you find someone else who can keep you steady." You tried your best to stay calm.

"No, no, you aren't." He answered in a pleading tone. "It's different, Y/N. Nancy - she - she was different." You scoffed in disbelief, but it didn't stop Steve from continuing. "The whole relationship was pretend. At least that's what she believed. Can you imagine that? A *year*. I don't know how she did it, but she pretended to be in love with me *for a year*. If it was anyone else, I don't think I would've gave a shit. But I did," He sighed and clenched his jaw before he kept going. "So now, I don't know what I want. I feel so alone and - and I'm lost and if Nancy pretended to love me for that long and I believed it, how am I supposed to figure out the truth, huh? How do I know that someone *actually* loves me? What if I can't be loved at all?" Steve dropped his gaze, his head hung low and for the first time, Steve Harrington looked weak. He began to shed tears and you tried not to panic. You stood up from your chair and made your way to Steve, and wrapped your arms around his neck.

"I'm sorry." You whispered, crying silently. Steve sobbed, resting his head against one of your arms.

"I just don't wanna screw-up anymore." He said in a tight voice. You rested your chin on the top of his head. "That night - the night I tried to kiss you...it was the first time I felt - happy."

"So was I." You confessed.

"Really?" He looked up at you with glassy eyes, he seemed so childlike - innocent but broken.

You nodded, smiling faintly through your tears, "And I thought to

myself, maybe there's something better out there than what I have now."

"Is there?" He sniffled. "Is there something better?"

"Yeah. There is."

Notes for the Chapter:

> I really hope this chapter didn't feel rushed. I felt like something was missing but couldn't quite place it. Hope you enjoyed!

4. IV

Summary for the Chapter:

> You and Steve go out on a little adventure, resulting in some drunken confessions of regret.

Notes for the Chapter:

> ughhhh, im so sorry for updating this so late! anyways, happy holidays! enjoy this long chapter ;)

A MONTH LATER :

You opened your locker, not paying attention as you stuffed most of your books into the space. You felt a breeze whir past you and you turned to see who it was. Steve leaned against the locker next to yours, a smile on his face.

"Hi, Steve," You said, returning his contagious smile. You rolled your eyes.

"I was thinking if you wanted to hang out tonight? We haven't hung out of school lately."

"I..." You paused, closing your locker. "I really don't know, Steve. I have to finish my homework and - and my parents are coming home tonight from their trip."

You both walked to your 6th period, bumping shoulders occasionally. "Yeah, but hey, you can do all that homework at my place. I can even help you study for the science test you got next week."

"Seriously? Steve Harrington wants to study?"

"You make it seem easy." He shrugged, chewing on his bottom lip. "It's kinda fun seeing you all flustered and confused anyways."

"Shut up, you little shit," You chuckled, pushing his arm. You strode into the classroom, where everyone began to stare at you and Steve, muttering hushed whispers to one another. You and Steve exchanged

looks, but you played it off like nothing was wrong. But certainly, the atmosphere in the room felt intimidating, rather, threatening.

"Okay, class! Take out your textbooks and turn to page 397. Your next outline will be on that. You have the rest of the class period to work on that." The teacher announced.

And with that being said, everyone went to work. However, Steve couldn't stop glancing at your side of the room. He noticed the row of girls behind you gossiping. They were pointing at you and giggling. It was obviously common in highschool and Steve often didn't interfere. But after his interference with you and Billy, he felt the need to protect you - even though he knew that you were certainly more than capable of handling yourself.

"How do you do it?" Steve heard one of the girls ask you after she tapped your shoulder. Your shifted to look back at her.

"What are you talking about?"

She snickered along with her classmates, "I mean, how does a girl like you get two of the hotte-"

Steve's hand jolted up in the air and he nearly knocked his books over, grabbing the attention of the teacher.

"Yes, Mr. Harrington?"

"May I sit with Y/N? I've been having trouble with the lesson lately and she's helped me a lot."

The teacher's eyes jumped from you to Steve and back again. She sighed dramatically, "Sure. Just as long as you aren't bothering other students."

Steve silently rejoiced as he scooped all of his books up and strode over to your desk. He pulled a chair up and plopped down next to you. "Really?" You arched a brow at him.

Steve gave you that signature innocent look of his. "Yeah, really."

"What do you think people are saying about us?" You mumbled to

him as you worked.

"You shouldn't pay attention to that crap." Steve pointed out as he tapped his pencil against his textbook. "Anyways, you helpin' me with this outline or what?"

"Yeah, sure." You smiled politely. You pushed your books out of the way and huddled around Steve's things. "Okay, so for this first part, write what you found important in the paragraph, but mention the..."

Steve couldn't tear his eyes away from your face, which was inches away from his. He occasionally nodded as you spoke, but he never processed your words. You were so...you were something else. But Steve said the same thing about Nancy before, and he knew not to make the same mistake twice.

"Earth to Steve? Are you even *listening* to me?" You waved your hand in front of his face and he snapped out of his trance.

"Huh?"

You groaned, "I was explaining how the text-"

"Right. Sorry, I-I zoned out." He blinked quickly, regaining his focus.

You narrowed your eyes at him, "Are you alright? You've been acting...off. Kinda."

"What? *No*, I'm great. I was staring at - just looking at the, uh, the um..."

"Oh, lord. Is something on my face? Do I have something stuck in my teeth?" You panicked, turning into a dark shade of red.

"No, no, you're perfect...ly fine." He laughed nervously.

You nodded with a gulp. Then the bell rang and everyone fled the room. You and Steve were the last ones out, chatting amongst yourselves. You both walked to the parking lot together after you grabbed your belongings from your lockers. You joined Steve in his car, riding shotgun as music played softly.

"Dude, seriously?" You scoffed at Steve, crossing your arms against your chest.

"Okay, what did I do wrong now?" He tilted his neck at an angle to glance at you.

"The song!" You pointed your arms at the radio. "I wanna change it."

You say I'm a dreamer, we're two of a kind
Both of us searching for some perfect world we know we'll never find
So perhaps I should leave here, yeah, yeah, go far away
But you know that there's nowhere that I'd rather be than with you here today-

"You better not. This song is amazing, Y/N!" Steve persisted. You changed it anyways.

Oh, what's love got to do, got to do with it
What's love but a second hand emotion
What's love got to do, got to do with it
Who needs a heart
When a heart can be broken

"What the hell? You listen to this?" Steve made a disgusted face. Your jaw fell in shock.

"How can you not like Tina Turner?" Steve simply waved a finger at you before changing the channel again. You both argued over the song choice for most of the car ride.

"Steve, seriously, no! We are *not* listening to that-"

"I pick the musi-"

"No, you focus on driving unless you want to die and-"

You switched between channels until the both of you gave up arguing.

No New Year's Day to celebrate
No chocolate covered candy hearts to give away

No first of spring, no song to sing
In fact here's just another ordinary day

No April rain
No flowers bloom
No wedding Saturday within the month of June
But what it is, is something true
Made up of these three words that I must say to you

I just called to say I love you
I just called to say how much I care
I just called to say I love you
And I mean it from the bottom of my heart-

Your hand darted out to change the channel, but just as you did, Steve did too. Your hand rested on the radio dial and Steve's hand was on top of yours. The both of you stared at the accidental gesture, before you instantly slipped your hand away and Steve cleared his throat loudly.

"Change station?" He asked tensely. You nodded with a sudden dry throat.

-

Steve slowly stopped his car by the sidewalk of your house.

"Oh, crap." You muttered, staring into your driveway.

"What is it?" Steve perked up.

"Parents are home now." You unbuckled your seatbelt and opened the passenger door. "Thanks for the ride, Steve."

"No problem," He responded as you shut the door behind you. You were headed for your front door until you turned on your heels and called out to Steve. Luckily, you caught him right before he was about to leave. "Yeah, Y/N?"

“Be safe!”

A smile grew on his face, before he nodded and drove off. You

unlocked the door with your spare keys, opening it. As you walked in, you could hear the sounds of silverware scraping against plates. You peered into the kitchen, seeing your parents at the table.

You were never really connected to them. They didn't show much care towards you anyways. Plus, they were in an unhappy marriage - the brink of separation even. But you knew that your mother could never leave your father, not because she loved him, but because he was wealthy.

"Y/N, sweetie, we didn't see you there. Join us." Your father said casually, not bothering to glance up from the daily paper he was reading.

"Hi, Mom and Dad." You waved before you pointed your thumb behind you. "I was actually gonna go upstairs and finish some stuff for school..."

Your parents exchanged looks. Your mom's piercing eyes made you nervous. "Is that anyway to treat us? Especially after we've been gone for a work trip?"

"No, mom. I swear it's for school."

Your mom shook her head disappointingly, getting up to grab a bottle of vodka from the fridge. You exhaled loudly and turned to head upstairs.

You locked yourself in your room, staring at the ticking clock on your nightstand. Was it normal to be this detached from your family? Steve and the boys cared more for you than your own parents did. *Steve* always cared if you were honest.

-

3 hours later.

You were laying on your stomach in your bed with your feet dangling in the air as you shuffled through your notes for school. You jumped when your telephone began to rang. You sighed in irritation until you picked the phone up.

”Hello?”

”Hey. Uh - it’s me. Billy-”

Your eyes widened and you instantly hung up. And a few seconds later, the phone rang once more. You didn’t pick up until it happened again.

”Hello?!” You answered in a hushed tone.

”Would you please just - just fucking listen to me...okay? Okay.” He tried to sound calm. “Look, I-I know I’m an asshole and I deserve to rot in hell and I shouldn’t have ever laid a finger on you, but please...I, you know I love you. Actually. And I want you back. Please, you were one of the few people who trusted me.”

You scoffed, twirling the telephone cord between your fingers. “No, Billy. I can’t. I won’t. I gave you so many chances to change. But that never happened. I’m not letting you hurt me again. You called me so, so many hurtful things.” You frowned. “Besides, I’m just another slut you can come home to and fuck, huh?”

Billy went silent before he reluctantly replied. “I want you to know that I’m sorry for everything.”

“You said that the first time you hurt me. And the second. And the third and so on.” You huffed. “Just - just be glad that I haven’t told Chief Hopper.” You hung up one last time, continuing to study.

-

Within a few minutes, you started to feel sleepy. You were just about to head to bed until you heard a tapping noise at your window. You could barely make out a figure of a man or a boy. You stood slowly and went to investigate the sound. You immediately opened the window, gasping as you noticed who it was.

”Steve?!” You gasped. He propped his arms on the windowsill, smugly smirking as you took a hold of his hands, which were almost as cold as ice. “What are you doing out here? It’s freezing!”

“I wanted to see you,” He explained.

You stared at him, feeling your heart pang at the gesture. “I don’t need you getting sick. Come inside or - or go home. If my parents catch you-“

”They’re not. Sneak out with me, Y/N.”

”Why? Where?”

”The diner on 78th street? We could get some fries and milkshakes, maybe even get a little drunk.”

”I would love to but...”

”Let’s go then. Besides, a pretty girl like you shouldn’t be stuck in her room all night when she could have some fun.”

You scoffed, leaning into Steve’s face so that you were centimeters apart. “And does Steve Harrington always do this with *pretty girls*?”

His eyes flickered down to your lips. “Just one pretty girl in particular.”

You thought about it. You sure didn’t want to spend the night in your room by yourself studying. Not that anything was wrong with that, but you needed to do *something* other than school stuff. “Fine.” You whispered. Steve was ready to help you out of the window until you continued, “But let me get dressed. I can’t go out looking like a mess.”

You were about to turn, but Steve caught ahold of your wrist. “No need to change.” Steve looked down at his outfit, causing you to do the same. You let out a loud laugh, muffling it with the back of your sweatshirt sleeve.

“Oh, my god. You’re in your pajamas!” You beamed. “How cute, Steve.”

“Didn’t wanna have to change in case you were gonna turn me down.” He said as you climbed out of the window. “Here, just prop the window open so you won’t have to worry about getting back inside.”

You wedged a book between the ledge and the window, and jumped off the roof with Steve. You giggled, feeling like the stereotypical teen rebel as you hopped into the shotgun of his car before you were out on the open road.

Steve rolled down the windows and you moved so that your torso was sticking out the car. The wind was cold yet relaxing against your skin, your hair blowing into your face. It was a quiet, little lonely night - but quiet was nice, which were one of the few things you genuinely enjoyed about Hawkins. It was a strange town, you had to admit. Although it seemed like nothing drastic was happening here, it did feel like so. Especially after what happened to Will. You had known the boy long enough to know that he would not simply wander into the woods and get lost. And the theory about the Russian girl that lived in Mike's basement who was a spy? And Barbara's disappearance? It was extremely strange.

"Hey, we're here." Steve said, shutting the engine of the car off.

Through the window, neon signs blinked at you guys, as if they were expecting guests. You and Steve exited the car in silence with an established comfort between you two. He held the door open for you as you entered the old diner. Immediately, the aroma of freshly made burgers and fries filled the air. He gestured for you to sit at a booth with red seats that had cracks revealing the spongy material beneath them.

"Take a seat, I'll be right with y'all," Andi, a middle-aged waitress, said as she walked across the room with a full tray of fries.

In a matter of minutes, Andi came back, balancing an empty tray on her hip while holding a notepad filled with chicken scratch.

"What are y'all ordering this time of night?" She arched a brow as you and Steve exchanged glances.

"We'll get two baskets of fries, two strawberry milkshakes, and maybe whip out some beer when we're all wrapped up." You responded. Andi scribbled down all your orders before she scurried away into the kitchen to help prepare your meal.

“So...” Steve began, running his slender fingers through his chestnut brown hair.

You laughed, “So?”

”I really should’ve thought about what I wanted to talk about before I brought you here.” He shrugged, picking at a small scab on his finger.

”Let’s play a game.” You sat up, folding your hands on the table with a playful grin.

-

You sipped your milkshake before you tossed a fry into your mouth, the tips of your fingers covered in oil.

“Okay, okay. Uh - truth or dare?” Steve pointed at you, laughing almost hysterically.

“Hm...” You tapped your fingers against your chin as you propped your legs onto the sticky table. “Hit me with truth.”

”What’s - I guess, what scares you the most? Don’t say like spiders or anything, that’s lame.”

“Oh, Jesus.” You chuckled, playing with the ends of your hair. “Being alone, basically. Not finding someone who’ll like me for who I am, y’know?”

Steve sighed loudly, “Me too. Well, ask away.”

”Truth or dare?”

”Truth.”

”If you could change anything about yourself, what would it be?” You leaned forward on the table, resting your chin in your hands.

Steve narrowed his eyes, staring at a spot of ketchup on your sleeve as he tried to focus. “My personality probably.”

”What?! Steve, you’re- you’re awesome. You’re a great guy! What the

fuck?"

"Not really. Not to many people anyways." He said casually, acting as if it was no big deal.

"You're great to me. That matters."

Steve glanced at you. His eyes wandered over your soft, gentle face. "We should get some beer."

You gave him a faint smile, "I'm in."

You and Steve started off with one bottle of beer. Then three. Then somehow you drank more than that to the point where you were wasted. Andi had confiscated Steve's car keys, making sure that none of you guys would be able to drive in your condition even though Steve wasn't as drunk as you. You stumbled out of the diner, loud and intoxicated. Your arm was wrapped around Steve's shoulder as you walked clumsily together.

"You know, St-Steveee..." You slurred, hiccuping. "You're the most b-bestest friend I could've ever wanted."

"Mhm." Steve nodded, trying to get you to walk properly. "God, you drank way too much."

"You're so nice to me. And you're funny, you play basketball, you have pretty eyes, and soft hair, and your lips are really nice." You rambled, placing your hand on his cheek.

"C'mon, I'm gonna get you home, alright?" He declared, peeling your hand away from his face even though he loved the feeling of your skin against his. He helped you down the long narrow sidewalk, listening to your drunken pleas.

"Pst!" You tried to call Steve. "Psttt!"

"Yes, Y/N?"

A smile tugged at the corners of your lips as you reached on the tips of your toes to whisper into his ear. "I have a secret." Steve nodded for you to continue. "That night you tried to kiss me...I wish you did.

I-I regret not kissing y-you. Like that's up there with the list of regrets. Just - just imagine how nice it would've been, kissing..."

"Yeah, well, not everything you want works out the way you want it to." Steve commented as he rolled his eyes. Suddenly, you tugged him with you so that you stood in the middle of the road.

"Dance with me!" You began to laugh, intertwining your fingers with Steve's, who quickly retorted.

"Y/N, we're gonna get run over if we dance in the middle of the road in the middle of the night. And we gotta get home now. Maybe next time." He tried to tug you back the way he came, but you yanked him back full force, which caused him to crash into you. He nearly knocked you over, but caught you mid-fall. Your hands were splayed out on his back as you stared up at him with wide and innocent eyes. Steve gulped visibly. "Okay. We'll dance."

He got you back on your feet, placed both his hands on your hips, and you placed yours on his broad shoulders, beginning to sway back and forth. The street lamps illuminated the ground beautifully, one acting as a spotlight on the two of you. To anyone, it would've looked crazy. Teenagers dancing in their pajamas late at night in the risk of getting run over. It was almost perfect.

-

Steve helped you crawl into your bedroom window. You clumsily fell inside in a way that was not at all graceful. You moaned as Steve picked you up and placed you on your bed, pulling the covers back. You could barely keep your eyes open. Your hands lay either side of you above your head, which rolled to the side, making you look heavily unconscious.

You groaned, calling his name. "Steve..."

"Shhh, hey, go to sleep now, alright? I'll see you tomorrow."

"No." You grabbed his hand before he could leave.

"Yes, look, you're gonna have a crazy hangover tomorrow and you'll be needing this rest."

His hand was still wrapped around yours. “Stay here.”

”I can’t. I gotta go home too. Y/N, let go.”

”Can - can you just wait till I fall asleep?” You questioned. Your eyes opened a little, studying Steve’s hesitant stance. He clenched his jaw, then sighed in exasperation before he sat on your bed, still clasping your hand. He studied your face, watching how your lips moved whenever you sucked in a breath of air, or how your eyelids fluttered every so often. A strand of your hair fell in your face when you shifted, and Steve lovingly tucked it behind your ear. He did that a lot around you.

“Y/N?” He whispered. You didn’t respond. *Asleep*, he thought.

He let out a small laugh and stood up, letting your hand let go of his. He made a beeline for the window, but something in his tracks stopped him. He glanced back at you, and shook his head once again, retreating back to you. He leaned over and kissed you on the top of your head, before he resumed with leaving. He closed the window behind him and returned into the night.

Maybe he did love you. Just a little.

5. V

Summary for the Chapter:

> Things between you and Steve become more serious. The two of you set out on a small trip, leading to a new and important turn of events.

Notes for the Chapter:

> please keep in mind that the chapter before this is set a month after the previous events, so time has passed with you and Steve. :)

You flushed the toilet, wincing at the aching feeling in your stomach after emptying its contents.

“Did you eat something bad? Have you been feeding yourself while we were gone?” Your mom bombed you with questions as she stood in the bathroom doorway, arms crossed.

“I probably ate something bad. It’s nothing, Mom.” You shrugged, moving to brush your teeth. She narrowed her eyes at you.

”Or have you been drinking?”

You froze and turned to look at her. You took the toothbrush out of your mouth and gestured to her with it. “I haven’t! Mom, just go back to sleep.” You shook your head, continuing with your morning routine. She scoffed and stormed back into her bedroom, slamming the door behind her.

You groaned, splashing your sunken face with water as you looked into the mirror. You retreated back into your room, changing out of your pajamas.

School was in an hour, but for some spontaneous reason, you decided to leave home early. Maybe it was because your parents were constantly nagging you about your sleep habits or your health. Or maybe it was because you wanted to see — *nevermind*, you thought.

You slipped your arms through your raggedy backpack, pushing your hair up into a bun that didn't quite look like one. You pocketed your house keys and left.

It was a nice morning. The neighbors weren't arguing for once, the dogs across the street that were fenced in weren't barking, and it was sunny. Splendid.

Until the sound of tires rubbing against the gravel road reached your ears. You paused to look. A 1972 Ford followed you until whoever was inside noticed your glare. You watched tensely as the windows rolled down. Nancy Wheeler stuck her head out the passenger window.

"Do you want a ride, Y/N?"

Your grip on your backpack strap tightened, as did your throat. "Uh, I think I'll pass. Thanks...though."

Then the backseat window rolled down and to your surprise, Will Byers was on the other side.

"Y/N!" He beamed. "Please, please, come with us!"

You couldn't say no to Will. The Byers were a lovely family, even though many people disliked Joyce, claiming she was crazy.

You sighed and nodded. "Okay. I'm coming."

Will scooted to the other seat, giving you room to sit next to him. Now, you were able to get a good look at who you were riding with. Jonathan was at the wheel, Nancy was sitting in shotgun, and Will beside you.

"Hey, Jonathan." You waved at him through the rear view mirror.

"Long time no see, Y/N!" He chuckled.

"You guys know each other?" Nancy asked, glancing between the both of you.

"Not really. I just lent him one of my cameras a few years back and

we just kinda talked whenever we ran into each other."

She nodded, before she remained quiet the rest of the ride. Surely, she knew that you and Steve hung out. You and Nancy didn't talk much. You weren't sure, really, if she liked you at all.

The whole car ride to school was silent as well, except for Will's quiet curses as he rushed to finish his English homework.

-

"Thanks, guys. Glad I could come along," You thanked them, slipping out of the backseat.

"No problem. You should always come with us." Jonathan replied, shutting the driver's door. Nancy stood next to him, kissing him goodbye.

"I'll see you later." She grinned, but her smile soon disappeared once Jonathan was gone. She looked over to you, folding her small hands in front of her as she stepped closer to you. "Could I talk to you?"

You swayed in your stance, your backpack hanging off one shoulder. "Um, Okay. Sure."

"I know we don't really like talk that much, and - and this is gonna sound really weird, I'm guessing. But uh, I know that you know that me and Steve aren't - well, aren't together anymore and he probably told you what happened." You raised a brow, wondering where this was going, "I heard that you and Billy broke up as well. Anyways, I've seen you hang out with Steve a lot lately and I just can't - can't really help to ask if you guys are a thing..." She trailed off.

"Oh, Harrington and I?" You laughed in a fake manner. "We're not - yeah. Just close friends."

"Really?

"Yeah. He's happy for you, you know. Though he hasn't really admitted it, I can tell."

She looked down at her shoes and nodded. "Yeah, well, thanks." You

were about to leave before she spoke again, “But if you two do get together, just - just treat him well, okay? You would be good for each other.” She smiled lightly.

“Of course.” You said, coughed then cleared your throat. “I’m off. Thanks for the ride.”

You walked away in a hurry, tucking a strand of hair behind your ear out of anxiety. Steve sat on his BMW several spaces away from Jonathan’s car. He waved you over, lighting a cigarette. You sauntered over to him, plopping down next to him on the car’s hood.

”Look who got their car back.” He cheered, tapping the hunk of metal.

”What?” You huffed, completely confused.

”Ah, right. You were wasted last night.” He chuckled loudly, “Had to give the diner my car keys cause they thought I was as drunk as you.”

”Yeah, to be honest, I go hard when it comes to alcohol. ” You reached over and stole the cigarette from between Steve’s lips, placing it between yours, “It was one of the few things Billy liked about me if I’m honest.”

Steve stared at you with his mouth slightly ajar, his eyes bouncing between the cigarette and your gaze like he was trying to say something.

”Yeah?” You raised your eyebrows, breathing out all the smoke.

“You don’t - you don’t smoke.” He scoffed, which turned shortly into a laugh. “You hate it. What happened?”

You let out a sigh, “I was just talking to Nancy, actually.” Steve tensed. “And yes, it’s about you.”

”And? Go on, don’t leave me missing out on all the details.”

”She was checking up on you, asking if we were dating.” Steve stayed quiet as he fished out another cigarette, lighting it with trembling hands. “Steve?”

”Leave it. It’s nothing.” He shook his head. It felt like he was lying. But you shook off that feeling

“I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have said anything. I’ll - I’ll just go.” You started, hopping off the hood. You threw your cigarette into the ground and stepped on it before you began to walk away.

”What do you say we skip school for today? I’m not in the mood to solve stupid equations and lose to Billy in a basketball match.” He said, the sky’s blinding light cause him to look at you with one eye shut as he tapped the end of his cigarette.

”Where is this all coming from?” You questioned, taken aback from his sudden idea.

”I don’t know-“

”Steve, you know I don’t skip school. And they’ll call our parents if they find out we’re not there!” You exclaimed.

“Trust me on this, okay? Who gives a shit if our parents find out? Don’t you just- don’t you wanna be away for a while? Somewhere other than Hawkins?”

”Like running away?” You asked quietly.

“Sorta, but just for a day.” He explained briefly, sliding off the hood so that his hand rested on the handle of the car door. “What do you say?”

You were hesitant this time. You never, ever skipped school. Surprisingly. No matter how many times Billy used to bother you for that, you never gave in. And you did care that your parents would find out. What would they say now? You shook your head. Was it worth it? For Steve?

”As long as we’re back by 8 tonight. And no funny business, Harrington.” You wagged a finger at him before getting into the car. “God, you owe me so much for sneaking out with you all the time.”

1 HOUR LATER

“Where are we actually going?” Your legs rested on the top of the dashboard as wind blew through the open windows of Steve’s car.

”You’ll find out,” He grinned, running his fingers through his soft hair. You felt at peace, sitting in shotgun while Steve drove at ease. His elbow rested against the door as his another arm was steering the wheel.

You watched as the scenery around you flew by the windows like a movie on screen. Your hand traced shapes aimlessly on the car window as you sang along quietly to the song on the radio. Soon enough, you fell asleep.

-

You woke up to Steve shaking your shoulder. “We’re here.”

You opened your eyes, rubbing them as Steve helped you out the car. Instantly, your eyes widened and your jaw fell open as you took in the surroundings. There was a small house in the center of a stretch of grass, while beside it was an entire field of sunflowers. There was a tree by the porch of the house and on it was a tire swing.

“Where - oh, wow, how’d you find this?”

“It’s family-owned. Some sorta ‘vacation house’ we stay in over spring break. It’s really beautiful.” He said, not taking his eyes off of you.

”I love it.” You heard the sound of leaves crunching and you turned, seeing Steve load something out of the trunk. “A picnic? Did you seriously plan this?”

He simply shrugged, humbleness written all over his face. He set down the bags of food and laid out a soft-looking red blanket, motioning for you to sit down. You happily complied, helping him take out all the food.

”Hope you like KFC.” He remarked, taking a bite into the chicken wing. He moaned in delight. “It’s delicious.” He winked with a mouth full of food.

You bursted our laughing, reaching over to wipe some gravy off the corner of his mouth. “You’re something else.”

-

“Higher!” You yelled as Steve pushed you on the tire swing. The sun was setting and daylight was going by fast, meaning you would have to leave soon. You felt like you were flying. You felt free. The only sound to be heard was yours and Steve’s laughs, which got even louder when Steve stopped you so he could have a go. “All that chicken is weighing you down.” You joked, giving Steve a gentle push.

”Damn, cut me some slack, alright? That meal was well deserved!” He fired back, using his feet to swing himself forward. As he got higher and swung faster, the rope looked like it was going to snap, which you pointed out to him.

”Hey, the rope is gonna give out if you don’t get off,” You gestured.

“What? No, I’m sure I’ll be fine. It won’t-“

”Steve!” You gasped, starting to laugh once you took in the sight of Steve sitting in the tire on the ground. You covered your mouth with your hand, muffling your unstoppable laughter. “Oh, that’s - that’s hilarious!”

”I’m fine, by the way.” He rolled his eyes as he stood up, brushing the dirt off his jeans.

“Aw, what? Is the poor baby upset?” You chuckled, making fun of Steve for his sudden mood as you started to close the distance between you two.

”Me? I’m not upset, I’m just - I’m offended by your lack of - of - of worry!”

”My...lack...of worry?” You said between your laughs. You placed your hands on Steve’s shoulders, which travelled to rest on his neck. “Are you okay?” You smiled.

“Yeah. Yeah, I’m good now.” He returned the smile, while his hands

found themselves on your hips.

You blushed hard and looked away from him. Steve caught onto your action and dipped his head so that he could lock eyes. His hand came to hold yours, which was still placed on his neck. “Hey.” He spoke softly, “Look at me, Y/N.”

You did, but you couldn’t lock eyes that long. “We should head back.” You pulled away, starting to head for the other direction, but Steve didn’t let go of your hand. “Steve, really, it’s getting late and I can’t-“

”Relax. Stop running away from me.” He narrowed his eyes at you.

”I’m not running away from you.”

”What are you so afraid of?”

Steve pulled you closer. Your chests were nearly pressed against each other as he pushed your hair away from your face. His hands cupped your face and he inched closer and closer to you.

“Steve, what are we doing?” You whispered. He rested his forehead against yours.

”We’re gonna do what we should’ve done a long time ago.”

And then you felt it. You felt his lips mold against yours, they were soft like you imagined, he tasted of honey and beer - a weird combination, he was gentle and careful, almost as if he was afraid to hurt you. You both pulled away for air, chuckling lightly between breaths.

You couldn’t help but smile. You watched as Steve traced his thumb over his bottom lip then grinned boyishly at you. You grabbed his arm and glanced at his watch. “It’s already 6.”

”Huh, is it?” Steve checked as well. His voice was low and raspy.

”Mhm.” You ran your hands up and down his arms. “I hate to be such a party-pooper, but we should really, really, *really* go home.”

Steve nodded and you followed him back to the car. He fished the keys out of his pocket and slid it into the ignition. He turned it. You expected the car's engine to roar to life, but instead, you heard a sputter. An alarming, no good, sputter.

"C'mon, stupid piece of..." Steve began to panic, constantly trying to bring the engine to life. After several failed attempts, he scoffed and got out of the car. "Ugh, shit! Let me check under the hood."

"God, we're gonna be in so much trouble." You muttered under your breath, seeing Steve pinch his nose as he studied the car. He rummaged around through the trunk a little too, but he returned into the driver's seat empty handed and unsuccessful. "So? What's up with the car?"

"We're freaking stuck, that's what's up."

You shook your head. "No way. Did you check everything? Is it out of gas? Have you been to the auto shop lately?"

"Yes, I tried every goddamned possible solution." He sighed, slumping in his seat. "Nada."

"I think I saw a gas station a few miles back. We could walk there and - and get help. Fuck, Steve, I'm so dead when I get back home."

"We are not walking. Not this late. We should just - I guess wait till morning, honestly, then from there, we could - we can figure something out." You stared at him blankly. "What? You got any other plans?"

"No." You stammered.

"And I don't have the keys to the vacation home..." He gestured to the house on the field. "So that's out of the picture."

You nodded, laying back against the seat. "Does the radio at least work?"

"No signal."

The both of you remained quiet. The tension and airy feeling from

the kiss was still there, however. You clicked your tongue against the roof of your mouth, bored out of your mind. What could you do? The tire swing was broken, Steve seemed pretty tired, and there was no signal for miles.

”You’re a very good kisser, by the way.” You told him as you looked over to his side of the car.

”You too.” He said.

You reached over and slid your hand into his. An amused smile washed over your face as he looked down at the action, and began to rub circles on your knuckle with his thumb. You unbuckled your seatbelt, climbed over the stuff between your two seats and pecked him on the lips. You giggled. And then Steve wrapped his arms around you and pulled you in for another kiss, this time more sloppier and demanding.

”Gosh, you’re gorgeous.” He chuckled, taking in your gaze as shadows danced across your face. He kissed you again. And again. And again. Until the windows of the car began to fog up and Steve was taking his top off.

Words were exchanged as Steve left a trail of kisses up and down your neck, and his fingers took ahold of your top and pulled it over your head. You gasped as he nipped at your shoulder and used a mixture of tongue and teeth. You ran your hands through his hair, which caused him to moan lightly. Your bra straps somehow slipped down your shoulders and Steve took the advantage to cup your breasts, before kissing you again.

“Backseat?” He whispered, gazing up at you with hooded eyes. You nodded, speechless once more as you climbed into the backseat with Steve. It didn’t take long before you were in your underwear and Steve was only in his boxers. You straddled his lap, while his large hands danced all over your skin. You marked his neck, but that was nothing compared to all the marks he left on your neck and below. He was about to unclasp your bra, but he paused, his hands coming to rest on your waist.

”Hey, is something wrong?” You asked him as you cupped his cheek,

worried that maybe you did something.

“No.” He cleared his throat, but you could tell he was lying. “Well, yeah.” His thumb drew patterns on your bare skin. “Do you wanna do this?”

”Only if you want to.”

“I just - I’m not sure if I wanna do this right now. Yes, I want you to see me other than a friend and I want every inch of you so bad, but I - everything is moving too fast than I wanted.”

You looked at him sadly. Not because you weren’t going to have sex, but because you felt the same. “Yeah, I get that. It’s my fault, I shouldn’t have-“

Steve gave you a pointed look. One that meant, ‘stop’. “It is not your fault.”

You got off his lap and instead let your head rest there, laying down in the backseat. His hands immediately played with the tangles in your hair.

You took a moment to consider everything that’s happened. Did you actually want a relationship with Steve? Or were you just better off as friends? No, that would be silly to think that way. For sure the two of you would be able to figure something out. Billy was out of the picture now. Steve wasn’t like him. Yes, he was a bit of a playboy, but he was much different around you.

Maybe that was the issue - he was different around *you*. And how sure were you that he was moving on from Nancy? But he kissed you. A kiss that could’ve happened twice if had let him that night you went swimming. You just couldn’t help but ask...

”Do you like me?” You murmured, breaking the silence. The only sound that filled the lack of noise were chirping crickets. “Not as a friend but...”

His eyes flickered down to meet yours and he scrunched his face up in a manner that showed he thought your question was stupid. “Of course I like you. Isn’t that -“ He laughed softly, “Isn’t that pretty

obvious?”

You grunted as you sat up and looked over at him, bringing your knees to your chest. “I mean, I guess but how sure am I, you know? I could be wrong.”

Steve stared at you with a dumbfounded face. “Holy shit, you’re oblivious.”

”What?” You breathed out. You scoffed, shaking your head hastily. “I’m not oblivious. I’m - I just don’t pay attention to little things.”

Steve laughed, “You’re pretty fucking oblivious.”

”Okay, stop insulting me and answer my question. Do you?”

”Oh my god, of course I do, Y/N. I wouldn’t have kissed you if I didn’t like you like that.” Steve’s confident aura began to disappear. He bit his lip, rubbing the back of his neck. “There’s been so many moments where I wanted to just grab your face and just kiss you. What’s not to like, huh?” He smiled nostalgically at you, his thumb coming to tuck itself underneath your chin, “You’re super smart, you’ve got a good sense of humor-“

”Really? *Just* good?” Steve pinched your arm, but either ways, chuckled at you.

”Then, a *great* sense of humor. You’re beautiful, you’re sexy, and you sure know how to take care of yourself.” He winked at you.

“That’s - thank you...” You blushed. “I wasn’t expecting anything like that.”

”And you’ve certainly changed me, Y/N.” He placed his hand on top of yours, “I think I love you.”

”Oh, Steve...” You broke out into a grin, kissing him again.